THE QUESTION

What does 'not of him who wills, nor of him who runs' mean (Romans 9:16)?

Asked by a THF member on May 19, 2026 · published November 9, 2026, updated November 11, 2026 · 7 numbered quotations · the 13 early Christian passages and 181 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/what-does-not-of-him-who-wills-nor-of-him-who-runs-mean-romans-9-16

The short answer *From the text: says what the passages say*

It means salvation does not come from human wanting or effort on their own, but from God's mercy. Origen explains that our will and effort are real and good, yet they reach the goal only with God's help, so God gets the credit. The later Chrysostom also says the verse does not cancel free will.

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HOW IT WAS MADE	Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.
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POINT 1 OF 6

Human will alone cannot win salvation

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Origen explains the verse directly. Our wanting and our striving are not enough by themselves; they must be helped by God. That is why, he says, Paul gives the credit to God who shows mercy rather than to the one who wills or runs.

1

> “Human will alone is not enough to obtain salvation. Nor is any mortal running able to win the heavenly rewards and obtain the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus, unless this good will of ours, and ready purpose, and whatever diligence is within us, is helped or supplied by divine aid. Therefore the apostle said most logically that it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *De Principiis (On First Principles)* 1 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 9, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 6

We work hard, but God gets the credit

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Origen compares the Christian life to sailors bringing a ship safely to harbor. They truly work, yet they thank God's mercy for their safety. In the same way, he says, we must spend effort and zeal, while hoping for salvation from God.

2

> “Not even the sailors or the pilot dare to say, "I have saved the ship," but they refer everything to the mercy of God. Not that they think they have contributed no skill or labor to save the ship, but because they know that while they contributed the labor, God secured the safety of the vessel.”

later in the same passage

> “So also, in the race of our life, we ourselves must spend labor, and apply diligence and zeal. But salvation is to be hoped for from God as the fruit of our labor.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *De Principiis (On First Principles)* 1 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 9, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
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POINT 3 OF 6

Willing and running after good is praiseworthy

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Some people used this verse to say salvation does not depend on us at all. Origen answers by asking whether wanting good and running after it deserves praise or blame. Since holy people do both and are not blamed, the verse cannot mean that willing and running are worthless.

3 "Now we must ask such people these questions: Is it virtuous or vicious to desire what is good? And is the desire to run so as to reach the goal in pursuing what is good worthy of praise or of blame? If they say it is worthy of blame, they will give an absurd answer. For the saints do desire and do run, and clearly in doing so they do nothing blameworthy."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *De Principiis (On First Principles)* 1 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 4, page 5** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 4 OF 6

God's commands show our choices matter

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Origen warns that if God wanted none of our effort, His commands and Paul's blame and praise would be pointless. Tertullian makes a similar point: we should not blame everything on God's will, because some things are in our own power.

4 "Otherwise, if God requires none of our labor, his commandments will appear to be unnecessary. In vain, also, does Paul blame some for having fallen from the truth, and praise others for remaining in the faith."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *De Principiis (On First Principles)* 1 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 9, page 6** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

5 "It is not the part of good and solid faith to refer all things to the will of God in that way. Nor should each person flatter himself by saying that nothing is done without His permission, so that we fail to understand that there is something in our own power. Otherwise every sin will be excused, if we keep insisting that nothing is done by us without the will of God."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tertullian,** *On Exhortation to Chastity* 2 (c. 196–220 AD) **Source 3, page 5** Read it in the library ›
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POINT 5 OF 6

A later preacher: will and run, trusting grace

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Chrysostom, a later 4th-century preacher, reads the verse the same way. He says it does not take away free will but shows that grace from above is needed. So we must keep willing and running, while trusting God's love instead of our own work.

6

> “For the phrase, "it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs," even if it comes in the course of the objection, still, if Paul himself said it, it would create no difficulty. Because when he says, "it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs," he does not take away our free will, but shows that not everything is our own doing, because grace from above is needed. For we are required to will, and also to run, but not to trust in our own labors. Rather, we are to trust in the love of God toward man.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **John Chrysostom,** *Homilies on Romans* (c. 386–407 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 13, page 6 Read it in the library ›

POINT 6 OF 6

No one can trust his own innocence

Our note · compiled by machine learning · Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words

Cyprian does not quote this verse, but he makes a related point. He calls God's mercy a saving gift and warns that no one should trust in his own innocence. This fits the idea that salvation rests on God's mercy, not on our own record.

7

> “Therefore, beloved brothers, let us acknowledge the saving gift of divine mercy. And since we cannot be without some wound on our conscience, let us heal our wounds by spiritual remedies for cleansing and purging our sins. Let no one flatter himself with the idea that his heart is pure and spotless, so that, trusting in his own innocence, he thinks medicine does not need to be applied to his wounds.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Cyprian,** *Treatises* (c. 248–258 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 10, page 6 Read it in the library ›

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THE LIMITS

What these passages don’t tell us

- These passages do not fully explain God's choosing and hardening in the rest of Romans 9.
- Origen and Chrysostom use comparisons rather than giving an exact account of how God's help and human effort fit together.
- Only Origen and the later Chrysostom explain this verse directly; Tertullian and Cyprian speak to the wider idea.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 13 early Christian passages and 181 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–13, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 14–157, in Bible order), then 37 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF’s updated English unless marked “1885 English” (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). “… [continues online]” marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *13 passages from 6 writers*

Clement of Alexandria, *c. 190–215 AD · sources 1–2*

1 *Stromata* 5.1 (on point 2) “by grace we are saved. Not, indeed, without good works… [continues online] **read ›**

2 *Stromata* 4.6 (on point 1) “12:33. For "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," Romans 9:15, says the Lord… [continues online] **read ›**

Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · source 3*

3 *On Exhortation to Chastity* 2 **Quote 5, page 3** “It is not the part of good and solid faith to refer all things to the will of God in that way. Nor should each person flatter himself by saying that nothing is done without His permission, so that we fail to understand that there is something in our own power. Otherwise every sin will be excused, if we keep insisting that nothing is done by us without the will of God.” **read ›**

Origen, *c. 215–254 AD · sources 4–9*

4 *De Principiis (On First Principles)* 1 (1885 English) **Quote 3, page 3** “if also it were said with regard to husbandry what also is actually recorded: I planted, Apollos watered… [continues online] **read ›**

5 *Commentary on John* 2 (1885 English; on point 1) “read, Romans 9:11-14 The children being not yet born, neither having done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of… [continues online] **read ›**

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6 *De Principiis (On First Principles)* 1 (on point 3) with respect to the apostle's statement, "Therefore has He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardens. You will say then to me, 'Why… [continues online] **read ›**

7 *De Principiis (On First Principles)* 1 (on point 3) that we do not have freedom of will. For, objecting against himself, he says, "Therefore He has mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardens… [continues online] **read ›**

8 *De Principiis (On First Principles)* 1 (on point 4) will force them to choose one of these two. But according to what we say, namely, that God makes vessels either for honor or for dishonor because of preceding causes… [continues online] **read ›**

9 *De Principiis (On First Principles)* 1 **Quotes 1, 2, 4, pages 2, 3** "Human will alone is not enough to obtain salvation. Nor is any mortal running able to win the heavenly rewards and obtain the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus, unless this good will of ours, and ready purpose, and whatever diligence is within us, is helped or supplied by divine aid. Therefore the apostle said most logically that it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy." **read ›**

Cyprian, *c. 248–258 AD · source 10*

10 *Treatises* (1885 English) **Quote 7, page 4** "Let us then acknowledge, beloved brethren, the wholesome gift of the divine mercy… [continues online] **read ›**

Methodius, *c. 270–311 AD · sources 11–12*

11 *Concerning Free Will* 1 (1885 English) "certainly grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, John 1:17 whence also by grace we are saved, according to that word of the apostle, and that not of yourselves… [continues online] **read ›**

12 *Fragments* 1 (1885 English) "certainly grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, John 1:17 whence also by grace we are saved, according to that word of the apostle, and that not of yourselves… [continues online] **read ›**

John Chrysostom, *c. 386–407 AD · source 13*

13 *Homilies on Romans* **Quote 6, page 4** "For the phrase, "it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs," even if it comes in the course of the objection, still, if Paul himself said it, it would create no difficulty. Because when he says, "it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs," he does not take away our free will, but shows that not everything is our own doing, because grace from above is needed. For we are required to will, and also to run, but not to trust in our own labors. Rather, we are to trust in the love of God toward man." **read ›**

THE BIBLE *144 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

14 **Genesis 6:8** But Noah found grace before the Lord God. **read ›**

15 **Genesis 49:18** waiting for the salvation of the Lord. **read ›**

16 **Exodus 9:12** But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not listen to them, just as the Lord had commanded. **read ›**

17 **Exodus 21:13** But if anyone did not do it willingly, but God delivered him into his hands, I will give you a place where the slayer may flee. **read ›**

18 **Exodus 33:19** And the Lord said, "I will pass by before you in my glory, and I will call by my name, 'The Lord,' before you; and I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." **read ›**

19 **Deuteronomy 13:9** You shall surely report concerning him, and your hands shall be upon him first to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. (Septuagint Deuteronomy 13:10 (Deuteronomy 13:9 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

20 **Joshua 11:20** For it was from the Lord that their hearts were strengthened to come against Israel in battle, so that they might be utterly destroyed, that no mercy might be given them, but that they might be utterly destroyed, as the Lord had said to Moses. **read ›**

21 **2 Samuel 18:26** Then the watchman saw another man running; and the watchman cried out at the gate and said, "Look, another man is running alone." And the king said, "He also is bringing good news." **read ›**

22 **2 Samuel 22:30** For by you I shall run like a lightly armed man, and by my God I shall leap over a wall. **read ›**

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23 **2 Kings 13:23** But the Lord had mercy on them and had compassion on them, and he looked on them because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and the Lord was not willing to destroy them, and he did not cast them away from his presence. **read ›**

24 **Psalms 13:2** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

25 **Psalms 85:7** Show us your mercy, O Lord, and may you grant us your salvation. (Septuagint Psalm 84:8 (Psalm 85:7 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

26 **Psalms 86:13** For your mercy toward me is great, and you have delivered my soul from the lowest Hades. (Septuagint Psalm 85:13 (Psalm 86:13 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

27 **Psalms 95:8** Today, if you will hear his voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the provocation, as in the day of bitterness in the wilderness, (Septuagint Psalm 94:8 (Psalm 95:8 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

28 **Psalms 147:10** He will not take delight in the might of the horse, nor does he take pleasure in the legs of a man. (Septuagint Psalm 146:10 (Psalm 147:10 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

29 **Proverbs 3:19** God by wisdom founded the earth, and by sound judgment he prepared the heavens. **read ›**

30 **Ecclesiastes 9:11** I turned and saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor wealth to men of understanding, nor favor to those who know; for time and chance will happen to them all. **read ›**

31 **Isaiah 8:9** Know, O Gentiles, and be defeated; listen, to the end of the earth; you who have grown strong, be defeated; for if you grow strong again, again you shall be defeated. **read ›**

32 **Isaiah 8:21** And a hard famine shall come upon you, and it shall be that when you are hungry you shall be grieved, and you shall speak evil of the ruler and of the ways of your fathers; and they shall look up to heaven above, **read ›**

33 **Isaiah 13:14** And those who are left will be like a fleeing fawn and like a straying sheep, and there will be no one to gather them; so that a man will turn back to his own people, and a man will flee to his own land. **read ›**

34 **Isaiah 15:3** Wrap yourselves in sackcloth in her squares, and lament on her rooftops and in her lanes; all of you, wail with weeping. **read ›**

35 **Isaiah 15:8** For the cry has reached the border of the land of Moab, of Eglaim, and her wailing as far as the well of Elim. **read ›**

36 **Jeremiah 6:11** And I filled up my wrath, and I held it back, and did not make an end of them. I will pour it out upon the infants outside, and upon the assembly of young men together; for man and woman shall be taken, the elder with the one full of days. **read ›**

37 **Jeremiah 16:7** and no bread at all shall be broken in their mourning for comfort over the dead; they shall not give him a cup to drink for comfort over his father and his mother. **read ›**

38 **Jeremiah 23:5** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

39 **Jeremiah 32:16** And after I had given the deed of purchase to Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed to the Lord, saying, (Septuagint Jeremiah 39:16 (Jeremiah 32:16 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

40 **Jeremiah 46:5** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

41 **Jeremiah 49:23** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

42 **Lamentations 1:5** He. Her oppressors have become the head, and her enemies have prospered; for the Lord has humbled her for the multitude of her ungodly deeds; her infants have gone into captivity before the oppressor. **read ›**

43 **Lamentations 1:6** Waw. And from the daughter of Zion all her majesty has been taken away; her rulers became like rams that find no pasture, and they went on without strength before the pursuer. **read ›**

44 **Lamentations 1:7** Zain. Jerusalem remembered the days of her humiliation and of her rejection, all her desirable things that were from days of old, when her people fell into the hand of the oppressor, and there was none to help her; her enemies saw it and laughed at her dwelling. **read ›**

45 **Lamentations 1:14** Nun. Watch has been kept over my ungodly deeds; they are twined together in my hands; they have come up upon my neck; my strength has failed; for the Lord has put pains in my hands; I shall not be able to stand. **read ›**

46 **Lamentations 3:43** Samekh. You have covered yourself with wrath and driven us away; you have killed, you have not spared. **read ›**

47 **Ezekiel 23:13** And I saw that she was defiled; the two had one way. **read ›**

48 **Ezekiel 36:12** And I will beget upon you men, my people Israel, and they shall inherit you, and you shall be their possession; and you shall by no means again be bereaved of them. **read ›**

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49 **Ezekiel 37:13** and you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves to bring my people up out of the graves. **read ›**

50 **Daniel 4:12** its leaves were beautiful and its fruit abundant, and in it was food for all; under it the wild beasts made their dwelling, and in its branches the birds of heaven lived, and from it all flesh was fed. **read ›**

51 **Daniel 6:7** All the generals and satraps, high officials and governors over your kingdom have taken counsel together to establish a royal statute and to make a binding decree, that whoever asks a request of any god or man for thirty days, except from you, O king, will be thrown into the den of lions. (Septuagint Daniel 6:8 (Daniel 6:7 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

52 **Daniel 9:9** To you, the Lord our God, belong compassion and atonements, for we have fallen away, **read ›**

53 **Daniel 11:17** And he shall set his face to come with the strength of his whole kingdom, and he shall make all things straight with him; and he shall give him a daughter of women to ruin her; but she shall by no means remain, and she shall not be his. **read ›**

54 **Daniel 11:31** And seeds from him shall arise, and they shall profane the sanctuary of might, and remove the continual offering, and set up an abomination made desolate. **read ›**

55 **Hosea 6:2** he will make us well after two days; on the third day we shall rise up, and we shall live before him, and we shall know. **read ›**

56 **Hosea 9:11** Ephraim has flown away like a bird; their glories—from birth and labor pains and conception. **read ›**

57 **Hosea 11:4** In the destruction of men I drew them out with the bonds of my love; and I will be to them like a man who strikes upon his cheeks; and I will look upon him; I will prevail with him. **read ›**

58 **Amos 2:15** and the archer shall certainly not stand his ground, and the swift of foot shall certainly not escape, and the horseman shall certainly not save his life; **read ›**

59 **Amos 3:9** Proclaim it to the regions among the Assyrians, and to the regions of Egypt, and say, “Gather yourselves on the mountain of Samaria, and see the many marvels in her midst, and the oppression that is in her.” **read ›**

60 **Amos 6:6** who drink strained wine and anoint themselves with the finest ointments, and have suffered nothing over the ruin of Joseph. **read ›**

61 **Habakkuk 3:5** Before his face a word will go, and it will go out into the plains; **read ›**

62 **Tobit 12:18** for I came not by any favor of my own, but by the will of our God; therefore bless him forever. **read ›**

63 **Tobit 13:2** For he whips and has mercy; he leads down to Hades and brings up again; and there is no one who will escape his hand. **read ›**

64 **Wisdom of Solomon 3:9** Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will stay with him in love, for grace and mercy are for his chosen ones. **read ›**

65 **Wisdom of Solomon 4:15** But the peoples saw and did not understand, nor did they take such a thing to heart, that grace and mercy are with his chosen ones, and visitation with his holy ones. **read ›**

66 **Wisdom of Solomon 6:6** For the lowliest may be pardoned in mercy, but the mighty will be mightily examined. **read ›**

67 **Wisdom of Solomon 11:9** For when they were tested, though they were disciplined in mercy, they learned how the ungodly were tormented when judged in anger. **read ›**

68 **Wisdom of Solomon 12:22** So while disciplining us, you whip our enemies ten thousand times more, so that when we judge, we may ponder your goodness, and when we are judged, we may expect mercy. **read ›**

69 **Wisdom of Solomon 13:19** for gain and work and the success of his hands he asks strength of hand from the thing whose hands are most feeble. **read ›**

70 **Wisdom of Solomon 16:7** For the one who turned toward it was saved, not by what he saw, but by you, the Savior of all. **read ›**

71 **Wisdom of Solomon 18:7** The salvation of the righteous and the destruction of the enemies were awaited by your people. **read ›**

72 **Wisdom of Solomon 19:1** But merciless wrath pressed upon the ungodly to the end; for he knew beforehand even what they would do: **read ›**

73 **Wisdom of Sirach 2:18** We will fall into the hands of the Lord, and not into the hands of men; for as his majesty is, so also is his mercy. **read ›**

74 **Wisdom of Sirach 5:6** And do not say, “His compassion is great; he will make atonement for the multitude of my sins”; for mercy and anger come from him, and his wrath will rest upon sinners. **read ›**

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75 **Wisdom of Sirach 7:4** Do not seek from the Lord a position of leadership, nor from the king a seat of glory. **read ›**

76 **Wisdom of Sirach 7:15** Do not hate laborious work, or farming, which was created by the Most High. **read ›**

77 **Wisdom of Sirach 11:11** There is one who toils and labors and hurries, and is so much the more behind. **read ›**

78 **Wisdom of Sirach 14:5** He who is evil to himself — to whom will he be good? And he will certainly not rejoice in his money. **read ›**

79 **Wisdom of Sirach 14:7** even if he does good, he does it by forgetfulness, and at the last he reveals his wickedness. **read ›**

80 **Wisdom of Sirach 16:11** Even if there is one stiff-necked man, it will be a marvel if he goes unpunished; for mercy and anger come from him; he is mighty in atonements, and pours out anger. **read ›**

81 **Wisdom of Sirach 16:12** As great as his mercy, so great also is his rebuke; he judges a man according to his works. **read ›**

82 **Wisdom of Sirach 16:13** The sinner will not escape with his plunder, and he will certainly not frustrate the endurance of the godly. **read ›**

83 **Wisdom of Sirach 16:14** He will make room for every act of mercy; each one will find according to his works. **read ›**

84 **Wisdom of Sirach 18:13** The mercy of man is toward his neighbor, but the mercy of the Lord is upon all flesh, rebuking and disciplining and teaching, and turning them back, as a shepherd his flock. **read ›**

85 **Wisdom of Sirach 18:14** He has mercy on those who accept discipline, and on those who are eager for his judgments. **read ›**

86 **Wisdom of Sirach 18:24** Remember the wrath in the days of the end, and the time of vengeance when he turns away his face. **read ›**

87 **Wisdom of Sirach 27:20** Do not pursue him, for he has gone far away, and has escaped like a gazelle from a trap. **read ›**

88 **Wisdom of Sirach 27:27** The evil things a man does will roll back upon him, and he will certainly not know where they come from. **read ›**

89 **Wisdom of Sirach 28:19** Blessed is he who is sheltered from it, who has not passed through its wrath, who has not drawn its yoke, and has not been bound in its bonds. **read ›**

90 **Wisdom of Sirach 29:17** and one who is ungrateful in mind will abandon the one who rescued him. **read ›**

91 **Wisdom of Sirach 32:18** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

92 **Wisdom of Sirach 33:1** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

93 **Wisdom of Sirach 36:17** Hear, O Lord, the plea of those who plead with you, according to the blessing of Aaron over your people, and all who are on the earth will know that you are the Lord, the God of the ages. (Septuagint Wisdom of Sirach 36:22 (Wisdom of Sirach 36:17 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

94 **Wisdom of Sirach 37:21** for grace was not given him from the Lord, because he was deprived of all wisdom. **read ›**

95 **Wisdom of Sirach 39:18** At his command is all his good pleasure, and there is no one who will lessen his salvation. **read ›**

96 **Wisdom of Sirach 39:23** So the nations will inherit his anger, as he turned waters into brine. **read ›**

97 **Wisdom of Sirach 43:5** Great is the Lord who made it, and at his words it hastens on its course. **read ›**

98 **Wisdom of Sirach 47:22** But the Lord will never forsake his mercy, nor will any of his works perish; he will never blot out the descendants of his chosen one, nor will he take away the seed of him who loved him; and he gave a remnant to Jacob, and to David a root from him. **read ›**

99 **Wisdom of Sirach 50:24** to confirm his mercy with us; and in his days may he redeem us. **read ›**

100 **Baruch 3:27** God did not choose these, nor did he give them the way of knowledge. **read ›**

101 **1 Maccabees 3:19** For victory in battle does not depend on the size of the army, but strength comes from heaven. **read ›**

102 **1 Maccabees 3:60** But whatever the will in heaven may be, that he will do.” **read ›**

103 **2 Maccabees 2:27** just as it is not easy for one who prepares a banquet and seeks the benefit of others; yet for the sake of the gratitude of many we will gladly endure the toil, **read ›**

104 **4 Maccabees 8:9** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

105 **4 Maccabees 8:21** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

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106 **4 Maccabees 13:14** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
107 **4 Maccabees 15:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
108 **4 Maccabees 15:8** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
109 **1 Enoch 1:6** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
110 **1 Enoch 1:7** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
111 **1 Enoch 1:14** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
112 **1 Enoch 38:6** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
113 **1 Enoch 39:2** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
114 **1 Enoch 50:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
115 **1 Enoch 50:5** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
116 **1 Enoch 58:2** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
117 **1 Enoch 60:6** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
118 **1 Enoch 62:13** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
119 **1 Enoch 63:8** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
120 **Matthew 5:7** Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. **read ›**
121 **Luke 1:78** because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the dawn from on high has visited us, **read ›**
122 **John 1:13** who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a man, but of God. **read ›**
123 **Acts 1:20** “For it is written in the book of Psalms: Let his dwelling be made desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in it; and: Let another take his office of overseer. **read ›**
124 **Acts 10:7** When the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household slaves and a devout soldier of those who waited on him continually. **read ›**
125 **Acts 10:22** They said, “Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous man and one who fears God, and well spoken of by all the nation of the Jews, was directed by a holy angel to invite you to his house, and to listen to what you say.” **read ›**
126 **Acts 14:1** In Iconium, they entered together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of Jews and of Greeks believed. **read ›**
127 **Acts 15:11** But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they are.” **read ›**
128 **Romans 2:5** But because of your hardness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath and revelation and righteous judgment of God, **read ›**
129 **Romans 2:8** but to those who are self-seeking and disobey the truth while obeying unrighteousness, indignation and wrath; **read ›**
130 **Romans 3:24** being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, **read ›**
131 **Romans 7:18** For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, no good thing dwells. For the desire is present with me, but I do not find how to carry out what is good. **read ›**
132 **Romans 7:19** For the good which I desire, I do not do; but the evil which I do not desire, that I practice. **read ›**
133 **Romans 7:20** But if what I do not desire, that I do, it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwells in me. **read ›**
134 **Romans 8:6** For the mind of the flesh is death, but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace; **read ›**
135 **Romans 9:11** For before the children had been born or had done anything good or bad, so that God’s purpose according to choosing might stand, not from works but from him who calls, **read ›**
136 **Romans 9:15** For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” **read ›**
137 **Romans 9:16** So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who has mercy. **read ›**
138 **Romans 9:18** So then, he has mercy on whom he desires, and he hardens whom he desires. **read ›**
139 **Romans 9:19** You will say then to me, “Why does he still find fault? For who withstands his will?” **read ›**
140 **Romans 9:22** What if God, willing to show his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, **read ›**
141 **Romans 9:23** and did so to make known the riches of his glory on vessels of mercy, which he prepared beforehand for glory— **read ›**
142 **Romans 11:6** And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. **read ›**

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143 **Romans 11:30** For as you in time past were disobedient to God, but now have obtained mercy by their disobedience, **read ›**

144 **Romans 11:31** even so these also have now been disobedient, that by the mercy shown to you they may also obtain mercy. **read ›**

145 **Romans 11:32** For God has bound all to disobedience, that he might have mercy on all. **read ›**

146 **1 Corinthians 9:24** Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run like that, so that you may win. **read ›**

147 **1 Corinthians 9:26** Therefore I run, not aimlessly; I box, not as one beating the air, **read ›**

148 **2 Corinthians 8:12** For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have. **read ›**

149 **Galatians 2:16** yet knowing that a man is not justified by works of the law but through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, even we believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by the faithfulness of Christ and not by works of the law, because no flesh will be justified by works of the law. **read ›**

150 **Galatians 5:7** You were running well! Who interfered with you that you should not obey the truth? **read ›**

151 **Galatians 5:8** This persuasion is not from him who calls you. **read ›**

152 **Ephesians 2:8** for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, **read ›**

153 **Ephesians 2:9** not of works, that no one would boast. **read ›**

154 **Philippians 2:13** for it is God who works in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure. **read ›**

155 **1 Timothy 1:16** But for this reason I received mercy, so that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ might display all his patience as an example for those who would believe in him for eternal life. **read ›**

156 **Titus 3:5** not by works of righteousness which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy, he saved us through the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, **read ›**

157 **James 2:13** For judgment is without mercy to him who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *37 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Deuteronomy 22:10 · 26:18

Proverbs 14:8

Jeremiah 6:16

Matthew 5:4 · 5:5 · 5:8 · 6:19 · 6:31 · 6:32 · 7:13 · 7:21 · 9:13 · 10:39 · 10:41 · 12:7 · 16:26

Mark 8:36

Luke 12:20 · 12:22 · 12:30 · 12:33 · 13:32 · 19:8

John 1:18 · 12:25

Romans 4:3 · 9:21

1 Corinthians 1:19 · 1:20 · 10:24 · 13:12

2 Corinthians 5:10

Colossians 3:5

1 Timothy 6:20

2 Timothy 1:16

Hebrews 9:14

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Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “What does 'not of him who wills, nor of him who runs' mean (Romans 9:16)?” on May 19, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

Library only. This study was written only from The Historic Faith’s library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed above, with a link to read it.

How it was made. Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith’s library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.

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THE END OF THIS STUDY